Dan Pagis, Exercises in Useful Hebrew

[1930-1986. Born in Bukovina, Went to Palestine in 1946; major poet; professor of Medieval Hebrew at Hebrew University]

"Is all well with you? Have you both murdered and inherited?"
(Example of interrogative sentences in a grammar book)

1
Shalom, Shalom. Hebrew has a past and a future but there's no present, only intermediate.
Now we will move on to the sentence.

2
A land eats its inhabitants.
Its lovers eat their lovers.
Now turn everything into future.

3
Lands flowing with milk and honey. This is a statement.
If you see them, send regards, this is an order.
And now an interrogative sentence. What's new?
4
Woe to me if I say, woe to me if I don't say.
Say which is a principle sentence and which is a conditional sentence.

5
Greetings and etiquette.
Good morning, good evening, a good year, mazal tov,
May it happen to you soon. Never too late.
Excuse me, is this the place?
Come back tomorrow.

6
A short composition. We went for a walk in the area.
The cemetery on the left.
The cemetery on the right.
Where did we lose our way?
Thank you.

7
A chat. Whose child are you?
Daddy's. The second wreath on the left.
Be exact in your language. Do not say: It was for nothing.
Indeed, you have already paid.
Say: In vain.

9
Synonyms. Shame, outrage, disgrace, reproach, degradation, debasement, scorn, mockery, aversion, defamation, abuse, blemish. Woe to the ears hearing this, defamation, disrepute, denunciation, baseness, meanness, humiliation, belittlement, vileness, and you should be ashamed of yourself!

10
Embellish your language with idioms.
Do not be sweet lest they swallow you.
It's not the flesh that stinks but that which is in it.
Better the head of foxes than the tail of lions,
Everything goes after the head, here the dog is buried!
You've arrived, know what you're demanding.
Did you demand nicely?
Is all well with you? Have you both murdered and inherited?

11
And now another short exercise to close off.
There are two words in it.
Carefully distinguish the difference between the two words:
Shalom, shalom.

Background – Text 2
Dan Pagis was born in Radautz, Bukovina (part of Romania). He was interned for several years in a concentration camp during World War II. His father had already gone to Palestine before the war, but all other members of his family were killed. He arrived in Eretz Israel in 1946 and became a schoolteacher on a kibbutz. He earned his PhD from the Hebrew University, where he became professor of Medieval Hebrew Literature and produced important studies on medieval poetry, as well as studies on contemporary Hebrew poetry. His poems relating to the Shoah are amongst the finest in any language (see Session 5 on the Shoah).

Analysis – Text 2
In this poem, Pagis connects himself to that unique and curious phenomenon in the lives of so many Israeli citizens: that of learning their new language – and learning about their new home – in the Ulpan, from phrases chosen and books edited for the sole purpose of teaching Hebrew.